Federal City Performing Arts Association
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 13, 1995
New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, Washington, DC

DIRECTORS:	Present:	Cohen, Dorr, Gerard, Madigan, Peirce, Perkins, Rosen, Wheeler, Weeks, York.
	Absent:	de Keyser (uninstructed proxy given to Wheeler), Greenwald (uninstructed proxy given to Gerard).
STAFF:		Holloway, McClelland, Monell.
GUESTS:		David Akridge, Bill Eadie, Charlie Merk, Henry Salevsky.

I. Call to Order

Meeting Called to Order at 7:30 pm by Wheeler.

II. Approval of Minutes

Discussion was held and Monell advised that the Wammie discussed in his report was not awarded specifically for the March concert and asked to delete that reference from the minutes.

Perkins moved, Gerard seconded, to approve the November 8 minutes as amended. Unanimous in favor (Weeks not present). Minutes approved.

III. Finance & Investment Committee Report

Dorr presented the Board with the establishing motion taken to create the Finance & Investment Committee and brief discussion was held regarding the Committee's recommendation for its mission statement:

The Finance & Investment Committee is an advisory group that serves and supports the Board of Directors of the Federal City Performing Arts Association (d/b/a the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington). We believe that by offering additional expertise to the Board in regards to its financial decisions, we are actively ensuring GMCW's long-term fiscal stability and growth.

We make recommendations to the Board, based on research and investigation, in the areas of financial planning and management. To do this we work collaboratively with the Board, other GMCW (FCPAA) bodies, and outside experts in order to formulate recommendations that are most in line with GMCW's Mission, Goals, and Objectives.

It was the sense of the Board that the Finance & Investment Committee's recommended Mission Statement above is appropriate.

Further discussion was held on the Committee's plan to establish a two-year budget and planning cycle to use instead of the current one-year cycle. Most discussion was favorable to developing such a cycle, but concerns were raised regarding the ability for the organization to plan ahead for the next two years within

the next two months (when the next budget cycle must begin). Holloway informed the Board that the Repertoire Advisory Committee was also thinking about developing a two-year music planning cycle but had decided that, due to time constraints, one more one-year cycle was necessary. General merits of two-year planning were discussed.

It was the sense of the Board that FCPAA proceed with one more one-year budget cycle (FY97) while developing the time-line and planning necessary to move FCPAA to a two-year cycle stating with FY98-99.

IV. Business Manager's Report

McClelland presented the FY96 Month 5 (November) closing report. Significant highlights included:

- Year-to-date (YTD) concert related revenue is below budget by more than $13,000 primarily due to poor season-ticket sales (budgeted 400 season tickets and YTD sold is only 270. The extra discount on season tickets has not been offset by increased sales to date);
- YTD other revenue is below budget by more than $13,000 primarily due to slow payment of capital club dues and slow payment of pledges from the fall phone-a-thon;
- Total YTD revenue is below budget by more than $26,500, and since budgeted revenue is $35,000 below budgeted expenditures, FCPAA currently has a net shortfall from budgeted expenditures of more than $61,500;
- YTD direct concert costs are below budget by approximately $2,500 primarily due to low music costs;
- YTD operating expenses are over budget by approximately $5,400 primarily due to GALA V registration fees of $2,500 and poster costs of roughly $1,300 not originally included in the budget;
- From a bottom-line perspective, for the first five months of FY96, FCPAA is operating at a loss of almost $32,000 from budget and $67,000 from total revenue expected;
- Cash balances are still not sufficient to "pay back" the loan from the Money Market Fund of $30,000 (only $24,000 of the current $57,500 cash balance is not obligated for other purposes).

Discussion was held regarding the deficit, its causes, and impacts on other areas. Dorr and McClelland reminded the Board that it expected to thoroughly review FCPAA's financial status at the close of month six (December). Wheeler informed the Board that the January meeting has been moved back two weeks to January 24, 1996, to allow the Finance committee time to review FCPAA's finances and provide recommendations to the Board at its January meeting.

York moved, Perkins seconded, to accept the report as presented.
Unanimous in favor. Report accepted.

V. Advertising & Fundraising Committee Reports

Gerard presented these reports. Significant highlights included:

- More ads are being paid for up front reducing the need to bill advertisers than in past years;
- All three corporate sponsors have been secured and two have paid.
- A direct mail piece was sent to donors and season ticket holders for the first time.
- Plans are starting for the spring yard sale. Members will be able to sell with us and have the money set aside in a GMCW account for their GALA expenses.

VI. Video Project Subcommittee Report

Henry Salevsky presented two proposals for a GMCW video production: a one-half hour documentary for a "PBS-type" show and a twelve minute promotional video. Lengthy discussion was held regarding the projects. Main topics included:

- Who has creative control of project?
  - Production company writes script with guidance from the board / video committee / music staff.
- What is the "angle" or "hook" of the project?
  - Possibly our mission statement but not clearly defined as of yet.
- Why now? Is this the best use of the organization's time right now?
  - Nathan does not see this as a priority for his time given FCPAA's other objectives and needs.
  - How do we see this project fitting into the Board's (and FCPAA's) current set of goals and objectives for time allocation?
- How is the project to be financed?
  - what comes first, approval of the project or funding for the project?
  - to obtain funding, do we need concept / story idea of project first?
  - can we obtain partial funding for parts of the project over the long term or does a piecemeal approach mean that donors would be less likely to donate if they are unsure when a product would be delivered?

Overall reaction to the project was generally favorable and discussion was amiable. Significant questions were raised for discussion at future Board meetings. Many questions raised were simply queries for additional information and more detailed suggestions from the committee to which the Board could react. Next steps for the project include (in order and assuming a positive result at each step):

A. The development of concept / angle / hook for project for Board consideration.
   - Decision point for scope of total project (do we aim for a half-hour documentary or the promotional video product?)

B. Further discussion of and resolutions to the following issues:
   1. Timing of project vis-a-vis FCPAA focus and energy - is this the right time to embark on this project given FCPAA's established set of goals and objectives? If so, is this an additional objective or does it replace something else already on the list? To whom does responsibility of the project belong?
   2. A clearer delineation and approval of who has creative control over project, including proposed communication lines, reporting lines, and organizational structure regarding relationships with other committees, production units, staff, and the Board.
   3. What will be the impact of cameras on performances in general (production, lighting, etc.) and specifically with respect to members who do not want to be on camera?
   4. A detailed cost estimate broken down by project phase (conceptual and story development, taping of concerts / taping of other segments, studio time, production, marketing and sales of documentary / distribution and use of promo).
   5. A proposed fundraising plan that corresponds to project phases and time-lines.
      - Proposal must clearly define expectations of and relationships between FCPAA and various contributors.
   6. Should we issue a request for proposals from multiple production vendors or negotiate with the sole vendor who has approached us with an unsolicited proposal?

C. The development of a storyboard for Board consideration (or other body as defined in Step B-2).

D. Ongoing project development and implementation as outlined in Step B.

VII. President's Report

Wheeler informed the Board that Annie's auctioned two extra tickets for the holiday concert they purchased to their patrons for $400 and have donated that money to Food & Friends in GMCW's name. Wheeler then asked for two comments about the winter concert from each board member, one for an aspect of the concert that went well and one for an aspect that could use improvement. Items cited included:

Items that went well	Items that could use improvement
- lots of energy - both members and audience	- comfort level of learning words, more attention to memorizing music
- peaceful concert	- members' discomfort with unapproved dedication of program and other political comments that were portrayed as GMCW's position; audience did not react adversely to comments
- high quality of production	
- liked the effect of starting the Sunday program without any introduction.	- lighting on audience members highlighted during announcements
- balance of technical excellence and fun	- need a true tech rehearsal and a true dress rehearsal
- balanced, warm fuzzy, concert with lots of traditional and new music. "back to GMCW"	- lighting produced good effects but was not flattering to the performers - "aged everyone ten years"
- voicing of the chorus	- choreography was fun, good, but not long enough to fill time
- bare-bones budget production that went very well, even without instrumentals	- security parking needs to be better advertised
- diction and sound was incredibly good	- some felt music was too Christian
- liked performing with no music, enhances the visual effect as well as the energy and sound of the chorus, performers felt more in tune with Jim	
- wonderful moments happened	

VIII. Music Director's Report

Holloway informed the Board that three news organizations covered the concert: the Washington Times, MW, and the Blade. Other highlights from his report included:

- Campaign Crazy is progressing well with music and script being written and refined. Thirty-five members auditioned for solos and character roles.
- Repertoire committee met twice in November and is scheduled to meet again in January. While discussing how to provide feedback from the Chorus to the music selection process, the committee is devising a survey of members about the past five years since the last member music survey was conducted. The committee is also beginning to look at themes and concepts for the FY 97 season and long-range planning ideas. They are hoping to develop a two-year planning cycle to correspond with the new proposed two-year budget cycle.
- Monell and Wheeler are coordinating efforts to obtain studio time in January to record selections from the holiday concert.
- A change in personnel at the Lesbian & Gay Chorus should not disrupt preliminary plans for us to sing at their June 8 concert. Holloway informed the Board that we will have a proposal to sing at that concert by the next Board meeting.

IX. Executive Director's Report

Highlights of Monell's report included:

- continued networking successes with the White House, Human Rights Campaign, and GALA;
- establishing more contacts with more organizations, including AT&T, American Express Financial Advisors, United Fellowship of MCC, SMYAL, and Whitman Walker Clinic;
- success at getting to know members and their concerns;
- enhancing the data gathering mechanisms of the organization;
- finding revenue enhancement opportunities by developing a fee schedule for our various performance groups and increased coordination and attention to CD sales (with a new UPC bar code, CD should be available in Tower Records soon);
- spending lots of time routing information and responding to requests for information.

Monell also informed the Board that he is close to arraigning for better office space at a reasonable price. Monell is negotiating with a few organizations and hopes to have a deal in early January. Brief discussion was held regarding the spaces being examined. Due to the potential timing of needing to sign lease agreements prior to the next Board meeting, Monell asked the Board to establish some guidelines or delegate responsibility of signing a lease to the Executive Committee.

Perkins moved, Gerard seconded, to authorize the President, in consultation with the Executive Committee, to secure office space.
Unanimous in favor. Motion Approved.

X. Membership Report

Rosen reported that Jeff Van Luyn will replace Rob Rexroth as First Tenor section leader and that ads will be appearing in the Blade for auditions and appealing for support members as well. Membership socials are being planned for the next two concert periods. The after concert party in July will most likely be a short lobby party due to the need to fly out to Tampa the next day.

Rosen asked for those with suggestions or ideas about the year-end annual party to see him.

XI. New Business

Discussion regarding the use of "out" terms on the outside of mailings was tabled until the January meeting.

XII. Adjourn

There being no new business,

Perkins moved, York seconded, to adjourn.
Unanimous in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeffrey R. Peirce, Secretary, FCPAA